the problems it faced. In a very general way, this is true. But this statement does not answer specifically the question as to what the mistakes were that brought the democratic revolution in Russia to collapse. Observers and historians of the Russian revolution have mentioned four errors of the democratic regime: weak policy concerning war and peace; delay in land reform; delay in electing the Constituent Assembly; failure to organize a government.

The war, of course, was a heavy liability for democracy. But a democratic government could have overcome this difficulty if the people had felt its sincere desire to end the war with a just negotiated peace. The mistake of the democratic forces was that they had left foreign policy in the hands of men who were opposed to their aspirations, hostile to the idea of a negotiated peace, and inclined to use the issues of war and peace as a weapon against the new revolutionary order.

The delay in land reform was not a major cause of the collapse of the democratic regime. Reform was on the way under Chernov's rural committees at the time of the first Coalition. Moreover, the peasants, who were directly concerned, resisted the Communists longer than did any other group of people.

The delay in elections to the Constituent Assembly was a major mistake that changed the course of events. Responsibility for this mistake is divided among many groups. The right, headed by the Cadets, fought tooth and nail to postpone the election in line with its policy of impeding consolidation of the new order. The Communists were interested in postponing the election as a means of prolonging the period of instability and gaining time to prepare to seize power. The democratic forces pressed for an earlier election, but not strongly enough. They yielded too easily and finally left the matter in the hands of a government that was a puppet of the right.

The delay in the national election was, however, only one aspect of a more serious failure of democracy, its failure to organize a stable and strong government. This can be proved, I think, by the sequence of events. In the early phase of the revolution, the democratic forces were gaining ground and the new order was being consolidated gradually. In July, the moderates in the Petrograd Soviet frustrated the Bolsheviks' bid for power. Three or four months later they had lost their grip over the army, and the political system supported by them in the Soviets began to disintegrate.

This course of events suggests that our main mistakes and the causes of our defeat must be sought in the period after the July days. The outstanding events of that period were the dissolution of the first Coalition, the formation of the new Cabinet independent of the Soviets, postponement of elections to the Constituent Assembly, and